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Metaphorical headlines in business, finance and economic magazines

Questo studio identifica alcune metafore concettuali prevalenti nei titoli di tre periodici in lingua inglese: *The Economist*, *Time* e *Newsweek*. Il corpus è formato da un totale di 2920 titoli, raccolti in un periodo compreso tra il 3/5/2004 e l'1/1/2007, tratti dalle sezioni economiche e finanziarie delle riviste. Le metafore sono state identificate e classificate secondo i modelli di correlazione forniti dalle teorie di matrice cognitiva (Lakoff / Johnson 1980) partendo dall'analisi sistematica delle realizzazioni linguistiche delle metafore stesse. I risultati mostrano come i titoli presi in esame presentino un numero significativo di metafore con una rappresentazione marcata delle ATTIVITÀ ECONOMICHE E FINANZIARIE COME ORGANISMI e delle ATTIVITÀ ECONOMICHE E FINANZIARIE COME LOTTA. Seguono un numero minore ma egualmente significativo di ulteriori rappresentazioni metaforiche che indicano come il discorso giornalistico divulgativo e semispecialistico dell'economia e della finanza ricorra sistematicamente alle funzioni retoriche della metafora.

1. Introduction

Metaphors occur pervasively and systematically in all types of discourse. The production, processing and communication of meaning depends most significantly on the mapping of metaphorical domains, as "the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff/ Johnson 1980: 5). Metaphors enable us to understand abstract concepts (the target or topic) by relating certain properties and characteristics of more familiar, commonly understood entities (source or vehicle) to them through a set of mapping relations or correspondences (Lakoff/Johnson 1980, 1999; Lakoff 1993); for example, in the metaphorical headline:

(1)   '*Redrawing the battle lines*' (E 30/4/2005 – 6/5/2005)[1]

[1] In this article, the letter (E) stands for *The Economist,* (N) for *Newsweek* and (T) for *Time*. The date in each quotation refers to the article included in the corpus.

the source domain is a particular characteristic of warfare transferred to business negotiations.

Linguistic metaphors are the surface manifestations, the actual written or spoken expressions in which the conceptual metaphors are present, underlying and bringing together contrasting domains. Different mapping relations can be grouped together under broader conceptual or root metaphors, for example BUSINESS IS WAR or ARGUMENT IS WAR. For Charteris-Black (2004) the linguistic representation causes semantic tension as a word or phrase in a given context is projected onto a differing context (domain) in which it is not expected to occur. On the other hand, a conceptual metaphor can be seen to be "a statement that resolves the semantic tension of a set of metaphors by showing them to be related" (Charteris-Black 2004: 21-22).

In some cases it has been difficult to draw boundaries between different conceptual metaphors within the same linguistic expression. For example, should the headline:

(2)   '*When mice attack*' (N 24/1/2005)

be considered to fall under the BUSINESS PEOPLE ARE ANIMALS (MICE) conceptual metaphor category or should it be considered as a BUSINESS IS WAR conceptual metaphor[2]?

Turner / Fauconnier (2000) and Fauconnier / Turner (2002) consider conceptual metaphors (CM) as often combined and blended to form complex metaphors. Metaphors can be blended conceptually and when two or more domains combine, they contain aspects of both domains as well as possessing new properties. This represents an ongoing process, enabling mixed or blended metaphors to form and represent more original or novel metaphor combinations.

White (1996: 49) describes these so-called mixed metaphors as combinations of metaphors, in which multiple features from more than one source domain are mapped onto a target domain, creating 'A is B is F' rather than the traditional 'A is B' sequence.

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[2] In these cases both of the conceptual metaphors are considered equally valid and presented as such in this research.

For the purposes of metaphorical headline analysis the above cognitive and blending theory paradigms should be integrated with a more pragmatically oriented definition of metaphor proposed by Charteris-Black / Musolff (2003: 158):

> Metaphor is a figure of speech in which a writer aims to achieve particular rhetorical goals such as establishing a relationship with the reader and making judgements by selecting particular words or phrases usually to refer to other topics.

This is in line with a more desirable consideration of the linguistic, discursive, rhetorical features of metaphors and an increasing need for more precise methods of metaphor identification. Recent research (Cameron / Deignan 2006) has proposed an emergentist view of metaphor in which the linguistic, conceptual, and socio-cultural aspects of metaphor are brought together. The development of metaphor should be considered "within the dynamics of situated language use" (Cameron / Deignan 2006: 688) proper to a specific genre and discourse community, the use of metaphors being as much an interactional, social phenomenon as it is a conceptual one.

Therefore, the aim pursued in these pages is to offer a quantitative analysis of the metaphorical expressions found in a corpus of 2,920 business headlines of three magazines (*The Economist*, *Time* and *Newsweek*) and to determine whether the occurrence of linguistic metaphors is related to specific conceptualizations of the economy. In the first part of the paper I will briefly present the pragmatic and cognitive functions of metaphorical headlines in economic discourse. In the second part I intend to describe my metaphor identification methodology and discuss the results of the analysis carried out on the researched corpus.

1.1. *Metaphorical headlines in economic and business discourse*

The Economist, *Time* and *Newsweek*, in their economic, financial and business sections, deal with current affairs on a global level, and have a wide readership. They are referred to as semi-technical magazines (Boers 2000; Henderson 2000) which often use popular

economic discourse embedded within the news discourse in order to gain the attention of both specialist and non-specialist readers. This type of business discourse has been noted to contain numerous figurative expressions (Charteris-Black 2000; Charteris-Black/Ennis 2001; Semino 2002; Koller 2004a, 2004b, 2005). Metaphors used in this type of discourse tend to popularise, concretise and dramatise issues making them newsworthy and interesting for the relevant audiences. They might also help understand the economic processes represented. In this respect Henderson (1994: 358) argues that "it is part of the generative aspect of metaphor to assist in the developing of a routine vocabulary for handling economic ideas".

These considerations need to be integrated with the general function of news report headlines which has traditionally been considered to occupy a prominent and evaluative position in the semantic macrostructure of the news text. According to Van Dijk (1988) headlines summarize the news text in a minimum number of words. For Bednarek (2005) headlines present encapsulations of the event-construal of the news story for the reader. On the one hand, headlines are part of news rhetorical devices which are organised to attract the reader (Mardh 1980; De Knop 1985; Bell 1991; Reah 1998)[3]. On the other hand, headlines may not clearly introduce the content of the article. It seems that the headline writer produces "enough uncertainty as to the meaning of the whole to induce the reader to turn to the article itself" (Brisau 1968: 8). The same ambiguity can be noted for metaphorical headlines. Metaphorical expressions within the headline may be unclear, confusing or obscure in their attempt to attract the reader, or at least, until the accompanying article is read. At the same time the conceptual metaphor linguistically expressed in the headline may aid the reader in decoding the co-text. Metaphors in headlines are consequently likely to facilitate and enhance the understanding of a particular subject discussed within the corresponding article. They may also provide an additional level of meaning and interpretation which is also a condensed conceptual-metaphoric representation of the accompanying article. Furthermore, the metaphors used in the headlines,

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[3] The function of attracting the reader is also performed through the use of particularly vivid metaphorical headlines: see Ortony (1975) and Cameron / Low (1999), according to whom linguistic metaphors are often used because they are expressive, compact and vivid in nature.

as observed by Bednarek (2005), can be evaluative of the event-construal presented in the article. In this case the evaluative function is a strategy used by newspapers or magazines to attract certain kinds of readers.

2. Corpus and method

The corpus under investigation here consists of 2,920 headlines, taken from the business and finance sections of *The Economist*, *Newsweek* and *Time* magazines (see Table 1).

Magazine	Total number of headlines	Number of metaphorical headlines	Normalised figures per 100 headlines
The Economist	2,201	505	22.94
Newsweek	423	104	24.59
Time	296	68	22.87

Table 1. Total number of headlines per magazine and number of metaphorical headlines.

The researched headlines, collected between 3/5/2004 and 1/1/2007, make use of rhetorical devices such as metaphors, metonymies, punning, pseudo-direct quotes and cultural allusions. In our analysis, the occurrence of metaphors in the headlines was first identified (the actual written expressions). A distinction has been made, at the identification level, between metaphors, metonymies and idioms. However, the analysis of metonymic and idiomatic expressions stopped at the identification stage as my interest was specifically in metaphorical conceptualizations. The headlines were then analysed manually, which was feasible on account of the limited size of the corpus, and this enabled a detailed analysis of the headlines, in order to distinguish between literal and metaphorical occurrences.

Focusing this research on the identification and analysis of metaphors, the next step was to deduce the conceptual metaphors underlying the linguistic metaphorical expressions. This method employs the notion of 'conceptual metaphor' to refer to the underlying

comparison in which two different mental domains are joined together. The actual written expression or 'linguistic metaphor' represents an example of the more general conceptual metaphor. Some of the metaphors were found to be 'fuzzy' (Cameron/ Low 1999: 79), as they were complex constructs presenting elements that could fit more than one conceptual category. In these cases a search for the predominant features was carried out, which determined the 'best fit' category for the metaphors. However, certain metaphors were actually found to represent more than one conceptual category, and were thus attributed to different conceptual structures.

For the identification of the metaphorical conceptualisations, Steen's (1999a, 1999b, 2002) metaphor identification procedures have also been used. The analysis of linguistic expressions used non-literally has included the immediate linguistic environment in which the expressions appear. In this case the conceptual metaphors were deduced by understanding and considering the headline together with the accompanying co-text, putting the metaphorical expression into its context. For the identification of metaphors, the immediate article context to which the headline refers remains the main surface factor of interpretation.

Following Steen's (1999b) suggestions with metaphorical headlines, the identification was co-textual when it was possible to identify an explicit literal referent within the accompanying article. If the literal referent could not be located within the text, the metaphorical headlines were considered contextual. For the latter group of metaphors the identification relied more on the contextual knowledge of the interpreter, his/her knowledge of conventional language and the shared culture of the discourse community.

As regards the conventionality or novelty of the analysed metaphors, this paper does not attempt a detailed identification, but in some cases a differentiation has been made. In some headlines conventional metaphors are visible, while others present examples of 'strong metaphors' (Cameron 1999), which are novel and present a higher incongruity and require a high cognitive demand[4].

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[4] The majority of the metaphorical headlines found in this corpus comprises conventional conceptual metaphors, although novel metaphors are also present. Goatly (1997) observes that metaphors can become inactive, lexicalised and used conventionally. A novel and creative

Certain terms were not considered metaphorical in nature: these include *float, sink, boom, fall, rise, flow* and *slump*, for example, as they have become practically crystallized in the language of economics[5]. Similarly, also phrasal verbs such as *give in, give out* and *give up* were excluded, as their metaphorical quality may have become opaque to users; in any case, they might deserve separate and in-depth research. Also foreign phrases, such as:

(3)   '*As le monde turns'* (T 13/12/2004)

have been excluded from my analysis.

3. Results and discussion

Table 2 shows the metaphorical headlines identified in the researched magazines.

Magazine	Personification	Animal	Plant	Non-specified organism
The Economist	113 (5.13)	30 (1.36)	10 (0.45)	17 (0.77)
Newsweek	14 (3.31)	3 (0.71)	1 (0.24)	12 (2.84)
Time	10 (3.37)	4 (1.35)	0 (0)	5 (1.69)

Table 2. Frequency of ORGANISM conceptual metaphor headlines:
raw data and normalized figures per 100 headlines in brackets.

The headlines analysed in *The Economist* are presented in two broad sections, generally called 'section headings', entitled 'business' and 'finance and economics'. The articles contained in these two sections constitute approximately one third of the total number of articles within

metaphorical expression can be changed into an ordinary and indistinct expression, due to usage and the adoption of the metaphor within different discourses. In this respect metaphors may become *conventional* if they are frequently used in a language community and our awareness of their semantic tension is thus reduced.

[5] In this, I agree with Smith (1995: 45) when he states: "A number of what were original metaphors have become conventionalised in the language of economics, and can now better be considered as technical terms than 'living' metaphors, [...as they] now are so familiar in the jargon of the subject that their metaphorical etymology is not immediately obvious."

each issue. In the contents page of *The Economist* there are always two deck headlines[6]; the first of these does not contain figurative language. This literal headline helps the reader to decode the meaning of subsequent headlines and at the same time it instantly introduces the content of the accompanying article. This headline is repeated on the article page in small print above the main headline fulfilling the informational macro-function of introducing the main topic of the article. The second headline or sub-headline on the contents page may contain figurative language. This headline is usually the main headline found on the article page.

The headlines in *Time* magazine are grouped under the section entitled 'business', with the exception of a few 'special edition issues' (extended issues), which use the title of 'Time finance'. Most issues contain one to three articles in the 'business' or 'finance' sections. On the contents page of *Time* an individual headline is found, which may be metaphorical. This headline is followed by a lead on the contents page. On the article page the headline is generally the same as in the contents page.

The analysed *Newsweek* headlines are all grouped under the 'business' section of the magazine. The majority of the 'business' sections in *Newsweek* contain between one and six articles, with a few exceptions of between eight to twelve articles, which are 'special edition issues'. On the contents page the heading is in boldface, followed by one headline per article, which may be metaphorical. The same headline is usually repeated on the article page as the main headline in boldface.

Consequently, *The Economist* presents more articles within the 'business' and 'finance' and 'economics' sections per issue, compared to the *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines. This is, in part, due to the fact that *The Economist* is a more specialized publication aimed at an informed audience. Nevertheless, *Time* and *Newsweek* also provide information of a more or less technical nature on current economic and business issues.

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[6] For Van Dijk (1988: 53) a headline may consist of several parts, such as a main headline, a super-headline, and a sub-headline. According to Mardh (1980: 14) "a headline consists of one or more decks which are independent functional units. […] in popular usage, a deck is normally referred to as a headline."

3.1. Metaphors: Organism conceptual metaphor

The most frequently occurring, most varied set of conceptual metaphors in the business, finance and economic headlines in *The Economist* and *Newsweek* is the ORGANISM metaphor. In *Time* this conceptual metaphor is the second most frequent type after the CONTEST/CONFLICT mapping. The organism conceptual metaphor is a type of metaphor with great generative power (Charteris-Black 2000; Caballero 2003; White 2003).

Metaphorical mappings do not occur isolated from each other, they can be organised into hierarchical structures, in which lower mappings in the hierarchy adopt the structures of the higher, broader mappings. The conceptual metaphor THE ECONOMY IS A LIVING ORGANISM, can be seen as the highest mapping in this chain of cognitive metaphors, in which numerous cognitive metaphors such as CURRENCY IS AN ORGANISM and COMPANIES ARE ORGANISMS descend from.

The identified organism metaphors were further categorised into personification, animal, plant and non-specified organism metaphors, which are lower mappings on the hierarchy (see Table 2). The highest percentage of organism metaphors in all three magazines were personification, or anthropomorphic expressions. When the economy is conceptualized as a person what happens to the economy can be easily related to what happens to our bodies and experiences (Lakoff/ Johnson 1980). This is perhaps one reason why the largest number of conceptual metaphors found in *Newsweek* and *The Economist* (and the second most frequent conceptual metaphor in *Time*) were organism metaphors, especially under the sub-category of personification.

In the conceptual metaphor mapping THE ECONOMY IS A PERSON the concrete source domain is the person and the abstract target domain is the economy. Previous knowledge about the more familiar, more directly accessible concrete source domain is projected onto the less familiar, abstract target domain. This is in line with the observation by Charteris-Black/ Musolff (2003) and Henderson (1994), who suggest that personification is often used to "make us feel more at home in a hostile world" (Henderson 1994: 48), encouraging identification with the abstract forces or processes of the target domain.

In my data of the conceptual metaphor THE ECONOMY IS A

PERSON the three magazines express this mapping by personifying different aspects of the economy, such as currencies, businesses, products, trade and market movements. Table 3 shows the frequency of social, mental and physical aspects of the personification conceptual metaphor.

Types of personification	Time	The Economist	Newsweek
Social related metaphors: i.e: relationships, social status family members and roles etc.	47	5	3
Mental related metaphors: i.e: mental health, emotions, (un)conscious states, mental development, thought etc	26	4	2
Physical related metaphors: i.e: senses, physical health, physical development, growth, movement etc	40	5	5

Table 3. Frequency of the types of personification conceptual metaphor headlines.

It is interesting to note that all three magazines show the economy (and related issues) as the physical aspects of people (such as, physical health, movement), mental states (health, feeling, emotions) and also the social characteristics of people (human relationships, social status).

All three magazines use socially related types of personification metaphor headlines referring to businesses and firms as people with different RELATIONSHIPS (with other businesses or firms), such as married businesses (business mergers), for example:

> (4)   *'Incredible marriage?'* (N 30/1/2006)
>   CM: COMPANIES ARE PEOPLE THAT GET MARRIED
>
> (5)   *'A very long engagement'* (E 13– 19/8/2005)
>   CM: COMPANIES ARE PEOPLE WITH LOVE RELATIONSHIPS

There is a high incidence of this 'relationships' aspect in the social personification sub-category, which accounts for 91% of the social personification metaphors in *The Economist*.

The higher number of socially related metaphors in *The Economist*, compared with the other magazines, can be attributed, in part, to the use of 'royalty' metaphors, occurring more frequently in the British-based magazine headlines than in *Newsweek* or *Time* magazines, for example:

(6)　'*King copper'* (E 13 – 19/5/2006)
　　　CM: MATERIAL (COPPER) IS ROYALTY

(7)　'*Passing on the crown'* (E 6 – 12/ 11/ 2004)
　　　CM: BUSINESSES ARE ROYALTY

The following examples are mental state personification metaphors:

(8)　'*Yahoo's personality crisis'* (E 13 – 19/8/2005)
　　　CM: COMPANIES ARE PEOPLE WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

(9)　'*Devices and their desires'* (E 15 – 21/ 4/2006)
　　　CM: OBJECTS ARE PEOPLE WITH DESIRES

The following example is a physical state personification metaphor:

(10)　'*America's ague'* (E 15 – 21/10/2005)
　　　CM: STOCK MARKETS ARE (ILL) PEOPLE

As well as personification metaphors, the sub-categories of the ORGANISM metaphors, comprising animal and plant metaphors, were also present in this corpus. In certain headlines animal metaphors refer to some aspects of animal behaviour, the behaviour of humans towards animals or the relationship between humans and animals, such as the 'taming' of animals:

(11)　'*Taming the wild web'* (T 22/8/2005)
　　　CM: INTERNET IS A (WILD) ANIMAL

In this specific case of cross-mapping between animal and power, the control metaphor is evident. The suggestion of power-shifts between differing businesses is vividly represented by presenting the product

(internet) as a wild animal which is 'tamed', or controlled. Examples of plant metaphorical headlines are:

>(12) '*Thorns in the foliage*' (E 1 – 7/4/ 2006)
>CM: DIFFICULTIES IN BUSINESS ARE THORNS / HEDGE FUNDS ARE PLANTS

>(13) '*Seeds of invention*' (N 11/10/2004)
>CM: BUSINESS PLANS ARE SEEDS / PLANTS

The use of humans, animals and plants as metaphorical sources underlines the fact that they all possess similar properties as they are all living things. However, each source presents distinct characteristics, which are specifically linked to certain sub-categories (White 2003) such as those referring, for example, to operations or adolescent characteristics.

The increase, decrease and overall changes in economic activity are seen as connected to and subsumed within issues such as health, death and physical development of living things. The following examples are headlines containing the conceptual metaphor THE ECONOMY IS AN ORGANISM, where a specific type of organism is not suggested, rather a general reference is made to all living things.

>(14) '*Evolve or die*' (E 29/7/2006 – 4/8/2006)
>COMPANIES ARE ORGANISMS (THAT LIVE/DIE)

>(15) '*flash to ash*' (T 21/8/ 2006)
>DIGITAL CAMERAS (PRODUCTS) ARE ORGANISMS THAT DIE

3.2. Contest conceptual metaphor

The second most significant set of metaphors in *The Economist* and *Newsweek* can be listed under the highest hierarchical structure of CONTEST/CONFLICT, which includes BUSINESS IS WAR, BUSINESS IS A COMPETITION and BUSINESS IS A GAME/ SPORT. In *Time* the CONTEST/CONFLICT category ranked as the most frequently occurring conceptual metaphor. For the frequency of CONTEST/CONFLICT conceptual metaphorical headlines refer to Table 4.

Magazine	WAR	SPORT/GAME	COMPETITION
The Economist	50	46	26
Newsweek	9	8	8
Time	9	15	4

Table 4. Frequency of CONTEST/CONFLICT conceptual metaphor.

Business may be characterised as war because both the target domain (business) and the source domain (war) can be seen to involve a vigorous or violent contest for differing gains, such as territorial or financial profits. This type of contest metaphor emphasizes the aspect of both fight and strategy, such as 'attack' and 'victory'. In BUSINESS IS A COMPETITION and BUSINESS IS A SPORT/GAME, the emphasis is on the physical and mental strength of participants in order to defeat the opponent. In particular, BUSINESS IS A GAME/SPORT conveys the idea of rivalry in competition, and this also applies to '*scoring*' and '*champion*'. These findings support Koller's (2004a, 2004b) studies in that military imagery often coincides with sport-related metaphors when referring to and representing possible conflicts between companies.

Occasionally headlines which have been put into the sub-category of war metaphors coincide with sport or competition related metaphors and a certain degree of overlapping of the contest metaphors occurs, as in the headline:

(16) '*Competition's quiet victory*' (N 7/2/2005)

in which the 'competition' aspect of the headline highlights the antagonism between companies, while 'victory' may denote a war-like characteristic of the business situation. The following examples of each sub-category of the CONTEST/CONFLICT conceptual metaphor show the linked but varied aspects of the same hierarchal mapping structure. Any given metaphor will be productive for certain parts of its source domain, leaving other aspects hidden.

CM: BUSINESS IS WAR:
(17) '*The online attack*' (E 30/4/2005 – 6/5/2005)

(18) *'Angry Allies'* (N 24/1/2005)
(19) *'Battle for the Bourse'* (T 17/1/2005)

CM: BUSINESS IS A SPORT / GAME:
(20) *'Who will win the prize ?'* (N 21/2/2005)
(21) *'Great game'* (T 6/12/2004)
(22) *'Three- dimensional chess'* (E 6 – 12/8/2005)
(23) *'Stuck with second best'* (E 12 – 18/11/2005)

CM: BUSINESS PEOPLE ARE SPORTS PEOPLE:
(24) *'An unlikely champion'* (N 20/9/2004)
(25) *'Martha's endgame'* (T 26/7/2004)

CM: BUSINESS IS A COMPETITION:
(26) *'Fighting to the top'* (E 29/10/2005 – 4/11/2005)
(27) *'Truffle scuffle'* (T 21/3/2005)
(28) *'Tussle at the top'* (N 13/12/2004)

Both the metaphors BUSINESS IS A SPORT/GAME and BUSINESS IS A COMPETITION highlight the unpredictable, uncertain nature and behaviour of whole economies. Games such as cards and dominoes, as in the following examples:

(29) '*Joker's wild*' (E 16 – 22/4/ 2004)
(30) '*Domino effect'* (T 20/12/2004)

involve a large amount of luck, in which there is an implied absence of control over the game. Therefore, metaphorically, a certain element of luck and uncontrollability of the economy and related concepts are present. When the market is conceptualized as a game, the economist ''acts as a commentator within a familiar man-made environment'' (Charteris-Black 2000: 160).

Within the mapping relations found in the data, there are cases in which the linguistic metaphorical expressions fall within more than one conceptual metaphor correspondence (see above). This is the case for WAR metaphor headlines in *The Economist*, as in the linguistic metaphor:

(31) '*The enzyme that won*' (E 13/5/2006)

This metaphorical expression could be classified under the contest conceptual metaphor of WAR but it equally represents the organism conceptual metaphor CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES ARE HUMAN. In some instances it is difficult to judge the 'best fit', even when analysing the headline together with the accompanying co-text. The two domains (organism and contest) merge to create a separate conceptual space (the blend), whereby they are fused and take on new properties. In the case of the headline:

(32　'*Red chips rule*' (N 8/11/2004)
　　　CM: BUSINESS IS A COMPETITION
　　　CM: RED CHIPS ARE HUMAN WITH CONTROL AND POWER

both conceptual metaphors seem to be equally valid in representing these metaphorical expressions. Headlines activating cross-domain conceptual metaphor mapping seem to portray a more powerful image of the state of the economy than single metaphor instantiations.

(33)　'*Vultures in the storm*' (N 9/5/ 2005)
　　　CM: TRADERS ARE ANIMALS (*Vultures*)
　　　CM: BUSINESS CONDITIONS ARE (EXTREME) WEATHER CONDITIONS

Finally it should be noted that once the ECONOMY IS AN ORGANISM and BUSINESS IS A CONTEST/CONFLICT conceptual metaphors have been established, a number of unconventional or novel linguistic expressions can be created, for example:

(34)　'*Separate and lift*' (E 30/7/2005 – 5/8/2005)
　　　CM: BUSINESSES ARE HUMANS WHO UNDERGO PLASTIC SURGERY

Readers will have prior knowledge of the verbs *separate* and *lift* referring to the literal use when describing procedures performed in plastic surgical operations. However, the metaphor contained in this headline is more novel in nature. Most likely the similarities between plastic surgery and businesses would not necessarily exist in the minds

of the readers prior to reading the metaphor (contained in the headline) and in this case the accompanying co-text. As the headline introduces the article and is a stand-alone unit, especially on the contents page, novel metaphors may be more effective to attract the reader than more conventional metaphors.

4. Conclusion

Although covering a rather limited corpus, the analysis demonstrates that metaphor in British and American financial news discourse is both systematic and pervasive, and as a consequence it structures the way we talk about and understand economic concepts. The analysis also shows that mixed metaphors found in headlines render a much stronger image of the state of the economy as opposed to instantiations of a single metaphor.

The most frequently occurring metaphorical headlines contain ORGANISM, WAR/SPORT/COMPETITION conceptualisations. This is consistent with previous research (White 2003; Koller 2004a) and shows that the above mentioned conceptual metaphors are highly productive in business and economic discourse. The occurrence of these metaphorical clusters in the researched headlines is meant to enable the reader to associate the abstract concepts found in the headline, and therefore the co-text, to more familiar, commonly understood entities (the source domain). Interestingly, the conceptual metaphor of the headline often appears as an extended metaphor in the accompanying article.

The headlines identified also show that authors rely heavily on the conventional knowledge shared by the discourse community, using metaphors consciously and to varying degrees creatively. The organism and war metaphors found in this corpus are largely conventionalized in nature as opposed to novel creations. However, even though they are conventional expressions, they are not so entrenched in the business and economic culture to be regarded as dead metaphors; in this way, headline writers use them as they consider them particularly newsworthy and stimulating for the reader.

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